

REMARKS

The Patent Office has restricted the claims into the following groups:

Group I: claims 1-18 drawn to a method of coating the internal surface of a device with a polymer comprising introducing into the device a solution of one or more monomers, introducing a flow of an inert gas, and initiating polymerization.

Group II: claims 19-23 drawn to a device comprising a microfabricated device or reaction vessel with an internal diameter of less than about 2 mm.

Group III: claims 24-27 drawn to a method of recovering ^{18}F from ^{18}O -enriched water comprising passing ^{18}O -enriched water through a device.

The Patent Office alleges that the groups of inventions listed above do not relate to a single inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, they lack the same or corresponding special technical features. Further, the Patent Office has taken the position that the disclosure of WO0073782 (“the ‘782 application”) undermines the Unity of Invention of the instant claims. Applicants submit that such a restriction is improper and, since the instant application is a national phase application, in contravention of PCT Rule 13.1. Applicants note that, contrary to the Patent Office’s position, instant claim 19, and the claims that depend therefrom, is novel and non-obvious over the disclosure of the ‘782 application. Accordingly, the Unity of Invention requirements are met by the instant claims.

The ‘782 application discloses a method of producing a **monolithic** support material for use in chromatographic separation. Accordingly, the ‘782 application appears to teach completely filling the reaction vessel with polymer and not simply coating the internal surface of the reaction vessel, as presently claimed. The Patent Office will appreciate that if the surface of the vessel described in the ‘782 application were coated, and not filled with polymer, chromatographic separation would not be possible.

Applicants understand that, even though the restriction between Groups I, II, and III is clearly improper, that they still need to elect a Group for this paper to be considered responsive to the instant Restriction Requirement, even if the Requirement is traversed. Applicants therefore

elect Group II, with traverse, for the reasons set forth above. Applicants hereby request rejoinder of the non-elected claims of Group I and/or III upon allowance of the claims of Group II.

In view of the above remarks, entry of the foregoing and prompt and favorable consideration of the subject application on the merits are respectfully requested.

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